

# HAVASU WATER CO.

March 17, 2009

The Honorable U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein  
Attn: Dan Wessel  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Fax: 202-228-3954

## **RE: S. 338 - SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Feinstein:

Thank you for introducing SB 338. We commend and support your efforts to restore local control to Contra Costa County and its citizens.

While we recognize S. 338 is limited to the Lytton Band in the City of San Pablo, we ask that you consider expanding S. 338 to address some of California's unique issues. In California, the Bureau of Land Management has been directed to administratively create a reservation authorized only at Secretarial discretion. It is questionable if the Secretary of the Interior has this authority in California, due to unique federal laws in our State. Moreover, this administrative action is being carried out for a Tribe recognized post 1934.

The City of Havasu Lake and its citizens share many services/resources with the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe, providing health, safety and public welfare. However, the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe contributes only \$12,000 per year towards the fire and emergency services. The community fire department has been forced to reduce the hours of operation, causing a serious public health issue. The County of San Bernardino is losing \$150,000 annually. The Chemehuevi are major recipients of County services but the Tribe does not contribute to the County General Fund even though its businesses are on public lands, not in trust.

We are attaching a letter that we recently sent to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, along with copies of letters from our water customers. Due to the unlimited authority of the Secretary of the Interior to administratively, behind closed doors, create a reservation on Public Domain lands, our water customers, some 500 citizens, many who are elderly, will soon lose their only water supply. *(See – letter to Secretary Salazar attached)*

Once again, thank you for introducing SB 338. It is a small step toward the necessary reform of federal Indian policy. We hope that you will consider expanding the two-part determination to all newly acquired lands in California and set specific limits and standards on the authority of the

Secretary of the Interior to create reservations. Our community will unquestionably support a broader policy of reform to protect our shared resources.

Sincerely yours,



Everett L. Hodges, President

Attachment: Letter to Honorable Ken Salazar

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